

February 22, 2017

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Patricia Martucci and I live in Hamden. I am a Board Member of ARC of Greater New Haven and I am testifying on the impact of the Governor's budget on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Arc of Greater New Haven was organized by families of individuals with IDD in the early 1950's. The agency has provided advocacy and a variety of services since then for individuals with IDD and their families in the Greater New Haven County and surrounding towns. In the early 1990's, the Board of Directors, decided to focus specifically on providing day support services to individuals with significant intellectual disabilities—many with complex physical disabilities as well. Since that time we have grown to provide daily person centered choice based services to over 100 individuals through our program locations in Milford, Hamden and North Haven; many of which live at home with parents and/or family members across the 18 different towns we serve .

The ARC of Greater New Haven is committed to supporting people to achieve their personal goals, to exercise their rights, to express their unique cultural identity, to experience respect and to lead a healthy and safe life. Supports are provided in an environment that enriches lives and exemplifies the practice of treating others as another would like to be treated. Opportunities are offered for individuals to learn new skills and to experience activities in the community which promote respectful human contact and social inclusion.

I applaud the Governor for proposing a budget that protects the individuals we currently serve through the DDS Day Program budget allocation. Ensuring the funds to continue to provide such vital services is pivotal to each individual's quality of life. However, the ARC also relies and commits to providing services to young adults aging-out and graduating from Connecticut's school systems each year. Although, the budget annualizes funding for age-outs, which I strongly agree with, the budget does not provide funding for the 335 graduating children that will need services July 2017 or the 355 graduating individuals in July 2018. These children and their families will be forced to stay home, not continue their support services and individual development, and family members will potentially have to quit their jobs to care for their children—the result is catastrophic. I implore you to add funding for these children and these families that desperately rely on services like those provided by the ARC.

In addition to being a Board Member of the ARC of Greater New Haven, I am a former teacher of individuals with I/DD. With mandatory funding for students until the age of 21, our students have thrived in an educational setting that provides not only academic skills, but repeated practice with social skills development and vocational instruction in the school setting and in the community. We prepare our students for a life after school and the removal of funding for these students prevents them from participating in meaningful and productive interactions in the community. These individuals with I/DD would regress and be denied the basic rights of all individuals.....to be happy and contributing members of society.

Please restore funding for day and employment services for new graduates!

Please support the Governor's proposal to invest \$3.8 million in the ID Partnership which will help people on the DDS residential waiting list, support developing more residential options for people with I/DD and stabilize community based supports.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Patricia Martucci

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